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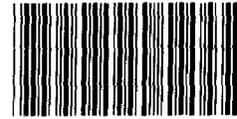
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DECENNIAL CENSUS

Focused Action Needed Soon
to Achieve Fundamental
Breakthroughs

Statement of William M. Hunt
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General Government Division



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DECENNIAL CENSUS: FOCUSED ACTION NEEDED SOON
TO ACHIEVE FUNDAMENTAL BREAKTHROUGHS

SUMMARY STATEMENT
WILLIAM M. HUNT
DIRECTOR, FEDERAL MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Since GAO's testimony last March on 2000 census planning, the Census Bureau has altered its decisionmaking approach and taken steps to refocus its research and development efforts. Driven by the Bureau's impending September 1993 deadline for deciding which designs to test in 1995, the Bureau has recommended eliminating all 14 design alternatives that have formed the framework of its research and consultation program for the last year.

Little time is left to achieve fundamental breakthroughs. In the next four months, the Bureau must develop a new basic design to test in 1995. While the Bureau's recent efforts cannot make up for valuable lost time and resources, fundamental breakthroughs in census taking are still possible for the 2000 census.

Such breakthroughs can occur only if they are properly planned, tested, and implemented. Bureau, Commerce, and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) officials must clarify the necessity and purpose of fundamental change, establish the proper sense of urgency, develop plans for its implementation, and devote appropriate resources to its accomplishment. These officials also need to allow sufficient time to build consensus with Congress and key stakeholders, as well as gain the public support necessary for major census innovations.

GAO believes the Bureau's set of decisionmaking criteria is too long and not sufficiently focused on what is most important--improving coverage accuracy, containing costs, and meeting federal data needs. Opportunities still exist to meet this more focused set of criteria. GAO continues to urge the Bureau to focus on simplifying and streamlining the census questionnaire, sampling during certain costly field operations, increasing cooperation with the U.S. Postal Service in building an accurate address list, and developing an approach for taking a "one-number" census, as opposed to the 1990 census that produced two sets of numbers.

Bureau and OMB officials need to scrutinize data requested by federal agencies to determine what the Bureau must do to meet their needs. The content of the census questionnaire and two possible census breakthroughs--matrix sampling and continuous measurement--depend upon this close examination.

The 1994 budget requested by the administration for census planning may underfund some important activities. Specifically, GAO is concerned that data processing research and development, geographic support activities, and test census preparations may be underfunded.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Petri, and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am pleased to be here today to discuss the Census Bureau's progress planning the 2000 Decennial Census. You requested our assessment of the Census Bureau's progress toward its key September 1993 deadline for establishing 1995 test census objectives. Specifically, you asked us to discuss the development and use of criteria for determining what to test in 1995; Bureau progress in analyzing data needs and possible content of the 2000 census; and the adequacy of the recently submitted fiscal year 1994 budget request as it relates to 2000 census preparation. My testimony is based on our continuing audit work, at the Subcommittee's request, to monitor and evaluate 2000 census planning activities and operations.

We testified in March, 1993¹ that a lack of Bureau progress in redesigning the 2000 census jeopardized the prospects of fundamental reform. Since then, the Bureau has altered its decisionmaking approach and taken steps to refocus its census research and development efforts. It has rejected all 14 design alternatives (each composed of different operational features) that were under study for over a year. Instead, it is concentrating on integrating promising features into a new design for possible application in the 2000 census. This action

¹See Decennial Census: Fundamental Reform Jeopardized by Lack of Progress (GAO/T-GGD-93-6, Mar. 2, 1993)

essentially reverts to the Bureau's earlier approach, which was previously published in March 1991.

Now in the 4 months remaining until the end of September, the Bureau must intensively research and refine the design features that appear most promising. It must develop a new basic design to test in 1995 by assessing whether the features under consideration comply with legal provisions, evaluating them against its decisionmaking criteria, and determining how these features can be integrated operationally.

While the Bureau's recent efforts cannot make up for valuable lost time and resources, fundamental breakthroughs in census taking are still possible for the 2000 census. Such breakthroughs, however, will require prompt consensus, policy guidance, and leadership from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and senior Department of Commerce and Bureau officials. These officials need to build consensus with the Congress and key stakeholders, as well as gain the public support necessary for major census innovations. They also need to test and integrate the many interwoven procedures and technologies that constitute an undertaking as big and as complex as the decennial census.

THE BUREAU HAS ADOPTED A NEW DECISIONMAKING APPROACH

Driven by its impending September 1993 deadline for deciding which designs to test in 1995, earlier this month the Bureau adopted a new decisionmaking approach. Based on the Bureau's analysis of the 14 census design alternatives, it has recommended eliminating all of the alternatives because they did not adequately meet the criteria the Bureau established. These design alternatives had been the framework of its research and consultation program for over 1 year. Instead, it is now redirecting its research efforts toward selecting the most promising features of those design alternatives for development and testing in 1995.

Dates for Design Alternative Recommendations Moved Up

The Bureau recently revised its schedule for completing its analysis of each design alternative by issuing design alternative recommendations (DAR). Formerly not scheduled for completion until August 30, 1993, all of the DARs were completed in May 1993. In part, this expedited schedule responds to concerns we expressed almost 1 year ago about the Bureau's lack of progress in deciding on alternative census designs. We testified in June 1992 that a key measure of continued census redesign progress would be the rate at which the Bureau rejected design alternatives to enable it to concentrate on the most promising

ones for the 2000 census.² At that time, we said that if the full spectrum of 14 alternatives was still being considered 1 year later, the possibility for meaningful change for the 2000 census would be severely diminished.

All Design Alternatives Recommended for Elimination

We have not had the opportunity to study in detail the final DARs and all of the supporting documentation which led the Bureau to recommend elimination of all 14 design alternatives. As we have said in the past, several of the design alternatives appeared from the outset not to comply with the Constitution or existing legislation and thus were incompatible with what became the Bureau's mandatory criteria. For example, one design alternative--sampling for the count--appears to violate the Constitutional requirement that an "enumeration" of the entire population be made for the apportionment of representatives. Valuable time and resources were invested in setting up and justifying the elimination of such improbable and less likely alternatives.

Despite the Bureau's recommendation to eliminate all 14 design alternatives, the Bureau still faces the formidable task of deciding which features will be combined into an integrated

²See Census Reform: Major Expansion in Use of Administrative Records for 2000 is Doubtful (GAO/T-GGD-92-54, June 26, 1992).

design to be tested in 1995. This is essentially the same position the Bureau was in when it began the 2000 census redesign effort over 2 years ago. Given the time constraints now facing the Bureau, it quickly must identify the most promising features and prepare operating plans for the 1995 test based on a new basic design that is yet to be determined. If features are not tested in 1995, it is unlikely that they will be included in the 2000 census.

Request for Public Comment Was Reduced in Scope

The Bureau also changed its approach for soliciting public comments on its decisionmaking process. The Bureau notice in the Federal Register requesting public comment on its decisionmaking criteria was modified significantly from an earlier draft. The final Federal Register notice only requested comment on the criteria used to evaluate the design alternatives. It did not request comments on the DAR process or promise to publish completed DARs in the Federal Register for notice and comment.

We always have encouraged and supported the Bureau's desire to open the census planning process to others. In our March 1993 testimony we said, however, that the Bureau's process for identifying promising census designs was time-consuming and cumbersome and that it might impair the Bureau's ability to institute major innovations for the 2000 census. In part, the

changes in the Federal Register notice responded to our concern that the Bureau needed to simplify and streamline this process.

BUREAU SLIGHTLY MODIFIED CRITERIA IN RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Bureau's final evaluations of the 14 design alternatives were based on 16 criteria. Originally, the Bureau proposed 18 criteria; 5 were considered mandatory because they represent legal requirements, and 13 were considered desirable. After receiving public comments through the Federal Register notice, the Bureau retained all of the mandatory criteria, switched one criterion--the ability to reduce the differential undercount--from the desirable to the mandatory category, eliminated two of the desirable criteria,³ and made several minor language changes to other criteria.

BUREAU NEEDS NEW, MORE FOCUSED SET OF CRITERIA TO GUIDE FUTURE DECISIONMAKING

Now that the Bureau has recommended eliminating all 14 design alternatives, it is not clear whether and how the Bureau intends to continue using the 16 criteria for future census planning. For guiding future decisionmaking, particularly its choice of

³Eliminated were the following two desirable criteria: (1) methods and procedures are understandable and credible to the public and (2) confidence that related aspects of the federal statistical structure will be in place to support the census.

features to test in 1995, we believe the Bureau should use a new, more focused set of criteria. The set of 16 criteria used for evaluating design alternatives is too long and not sufficiently focused on what is most important. The division of the criteria into mandatory and desirable categories does not succinctly capture the essence of what a redesigned census needs to accomplish. Five of the six mandatory criteria essentially do no more than recognize that the Bureau must meet the requirements of the Constitution and satisfy other statutory obligations or requirements for data. At some point soon, the Bureau and others in the executive branch must agree on a more manageable and meaningful list of the most important desired outcome-oriented criteria to ensure that the Bureau's research, development, and testing activities focus on what truly needs to be accomplished in the 2000 census.

In his testimony on March 2, 1993, the Acting Director of the Bureau acknowledged that legal requirements for apportionment counts, state redistricting data, and age and race/ethnicity data that are required to enforce the Voting Rights Act must be satisfied. In addition, he said that the following "three overarching concerns" would guide the Bureau: (1) reducing the differential undercount and making the census more accurate overall, (2) containing costs, and (3) keeping the process open.

Mr. Chairman, your April 9, 1993, letter to the Bureau responding to the Federal Register notice also expressed concern that the large number of criteria might overshadow the chief goals of the census. You suggested a clearer approach might be to identify the primary aims of the next census. You also stated your belief that reducing the differential undercount and containing cost should be the two most important goals. You added that such clarity of purpose would help the Bureau communicate its mission to others, as well as provide a focus for its own work. We strongly agree. Overall, we believe that the 2000 census must strike a reasonable balance among coverage accuracy, cost considerations, and federal content needs.

For over 200 years, a primary criterion by which to judge the success of the census has been and continues to be coverage accuracy--enumerating all persons and enumerating them at their proper location. Acknowledging the impossibility of achieving a perfect count, the Bureau, in recent censuses, has modified the coverage accuracy goal to include reducing the differential undercount, whereby the population of racial or ethnic groups are not disproportionately missed in the census.

In the austere budget environment facing the federal government in this decade, containing the cost of the next census must unquestionably be a primary criterion. If cost efficiencies are not vigorously pursued as part of the 2000 census design, there

is a risk that the 2000 census will not be completed as planned. In the past two censuses, costs have escalated, and the Bureau has needed last-minute emergency supplemental appropriations to complete them. If this need arises again in the 2000 census, given the bleak fiscal condition facing the federal government, there is no assurance that the Congress will provide the necessary financial bailout. Under such a scenario, the 2000 census may be truncated by financial necessity rather than through prudent planning--posing unknown risks for data quality.

The third primary criterion is collecting sufficient data to satisfy federal program needs. The census currently is the only source that provides needed data for small areas to redraw legislative and other political boundaries, to enforce the Voting Rights Act, and to allocate federal funds such as education funds targeted to school districts, housing funds targeted to census tracts, or transportation funds targeted to local governments. In meeting these federal program needs for small area data, the census must strike a balance and avoid placing such an undue burden on the respondents that meeting data needs would unacceptably interfere with improving coverage accuracy or controlling costs.

OPPORTUNITIES EXIST FOR IMPROVING ACCURACY,
CONTAINING COSTS, AND MEETING FEDERAL DATA NEEDS

We have advocated for some time that opportunities exist for achieving coverage accuracy and cost efficiencies while still meeting federal data needs and they should be considered for testing in 1995. These opportunities include (1) improving public cooperation through the use of more user-friendly, streamlined census questionnaires and more frequent mail contacts; (2) reducing costly and error-prone field follow-up efforts by using sampling techniques to follow up with households who do not mail back their questionnaires; (3) obtaining an improved address list linked to the Bureau's geographic system primarily by greater reliance on the Postal Service; and (4) developing an approach for a one-number census. While the Bureau also recognizes these as valuable opportunities, much more remains to be done, and time is running out. We urge the Bureau to take decisive action to ensure that these opportunities are thoroughly explored.

Opportunities for Increasing Public Cooperation

Public cooperation is essential for obtaining accurate census data at a reasonable cost. The Bureau's 1992 research demonstrated the usefulness of simplifying and streamlining the census questionnaire and the effectiveness of multiple mail

contacts. In the Bureau's tests, these changes resulted in significant improvements in mail response. The Bureau projected that these changes could save about \$0.5 billion (in 1992 dollars). At the April 27, 1993, hearing held by the House Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations on the Bureau's appropriation request for fiscal year 1994, Members, commenting on 2000 census planning efforts, emphasized the importance of counting the population and simplifying the form.

Opportunities for Reducing Costly Field Work

Even with a simplified questionnaire, the Bureau's 1992 test showed that the Bureau can still expect that a large number of households will not return their forms by mail. Statistical sampling of these nonrespondents would reduce the time and costly labor-intensive fieldwork now required to follow up on missing questionnaires. The Bureau only recently initiated research that could provide a basis for using sampling to follow up nonresponding households. A key objective of the Bureau's research on sampling is to identify the point at which sampling can provide data of comparable quality to the existing follow-up procedures in a more cost-effective manner. The Bureau estimated that it could have saved \$460 million if it had sampled 10 percent of nonresponding households in the 1990 census rather than attempting to collect data on all of them. The Bureau also

will be proposing legislation to make it clear that sampling may be used to estimate the number and characteristics of people in nonresponding households.

Opportunities for Improving the Address List

An accurate and complete address list and associated geographic information is a cornerstone of a successful mail census. For several decades, the Bureau has recognized the valuable contribution that the Postal Service could make to improve the quality of the address list. In the past few years, the Bureau also has recognized the value of maintaining an accurate and complete address list throughout the decade. However, only in the past few months, through the encouragement of this Subcommittee, have the Bureau and the Postal Service initiated a feasibility test of sharing address information on a long-term basis.

Concerns about the legal authority of the Postal Service to share its information with the Bureau still need to be resolved so that the Bureau can take full advantage of the address and occupancy status data now maintained on computerized files by the Postal Service. The importance to a mail census of achieving optimal cooperation and communication between the Bureau and the Postal Service cannot be overstated. Both organizations must give this cooperative effort the attention it deserves.

Despite progress on exchanging address list information, the Bureau has been unable to obtain the hoped-for level of cooperation from the Postal Service for updating the Bureau's automated geographic system. The Bureau proposed sharing its geographic information system data, enhanced to meet special Postal Service needs, with the Postal Service. In return, the Postal Service would assist in updating the Bureau's geographic and address lists. The Postal Service decided that the Bureau's proposed cooperative arrangement would be too costly and would not add enough value to its existing methods for planning mail delivery routes. The Bureau therefore is continuing to explore the availability of information from other sources, such as local governments, for updating its automated geographic system. In particular, the Bureau plans to explore the availability of files and methodologies for performing data exchanges of geographic file information.

Opportunities Provided by a One-Number Census

We believe a one-number census, which combines the results of the traditional head count supplemented by administrative records and statistical procedures to produce a single, best possible set of numbers by the legal deadlines, offers several advantages. Primarily, a one-number census provides the potential for improving the counts through the use of a combination of methodologies.

In 1990, the Bureau developed two sets of census numbers. The first set resulted from standard census procedures and was produced by the statutory deadlines. The other set was a composite of the first set adjusted by statistical procedures but completed after the statutory deadlines. In 1990, there was considerable controversy and resulting litigation over which set should be the official census numbers.

Although a one-number census presents operational and technical challenges, using it could improve the count and reduce the overall cost of a census. Obtaining consensus on statistical procedures before the actual census is conducted also could help avoid the controversy that recently surrounded the issue of adjusting the census count. To obtain these benefits, the Bureau must develop operational procedures that will integrate the methodologies selected to produce a one-number census and test them in 1995. This effort will be difficult given the limited time left to prepare for the 1995 test census.

NEED TO SCRUTINIZE FEDERAL DATA REQUIREMENTS

In December 1992, OMB asked federal agencies to identify their data needs from the 2000 census. In its request, OMB also specifically asked the agencies to identify possible alternative data sources and to comment on two design alternatives under

consideration by the Bureau that would affect data content: expanded content and continuous measurement.

The Bureau is currently reviewing the federal agencies' responses. Preliminary information shows that the agencies want the same type and amount of data collected in the 1990 census. In general, federal agencies did not identify alternative sources to satisfy their data needs. Also, many had reservations about other design alternatives that featured changes in data availability or reliability.

The Bureau and OMB officials need to scrutinize these responses to determine what the Bureau must do to meet federal data needs. In a 1986 review, we found, for example, that obtaining housing data from all households to produce block level data appeared questionable.⁴ We also found that user requirements for decennial data were not fully substantiated and evaluated before placing the question on the census form. The challenge is to weigh the benefits of these data against the cost of collecting them.

The fundamental issue underlying the census redesign effort is whether the census can and should continue to be the only source for much of the nation's population and housing information. The

⁴See Decennial Census: Issues Related to Questionnaire Development (GAO/GGD-86-74BR, May 5, 1986).

National Academy of Science panel, whose chairman is testifying here today, will assist in this systematic review of population and housing data needs. The Academy's panel will be examining the need for data at different frequencies and geographic levels of detail. It also will be examining the availability and costs of alternative methods to obtain these data. We urge officials in the executive branch to examine carefully how to meet federal data needs for subnational data--by a once-in-a-decade census, by more frequent sample surveys that produce less geographically detailed data, or by administrative records.

Expanded Content Through Matrix Sampling Raises Concerns

Expanded content through matrix sampling would provide data on a wider range of subjects than those in 1990. Under this alternative, which the Bureau is considering as part of its test in 1995, most households would receive a short form. Other households would receive one version of several different medium length forms, each with a different set of questions. (In 1990, a single longer form was sent to approximately one in six households.) With such matrix sampling, more questions could be asked overall without increasing the total respondent burden and the maximum burden on any one sample household receiving the medium length form would be less than it was in the prior census.

Because matrix sampling presents difficult operational and processing problems, there are limitations, however, to this design . Only subjects collected on the same sample form could be cross-tabulated directly. For example, if one sample form collected information on veteran status and another sample form collected information on income, the Bureau could not produce a cross-tabulation showing the income status of veterans directly from the data. Such information would have to be produced through estimates relying on other data or assumed mathematical relationships. Moreover, to reduce total respondent burden, any one item generally would be asked of fewer households. Thus the data would have less reliability (higher sample error) than it did in 1990. Many data users had reservations about the ability to obtain the cross-tabulations they needed and the reliability of the data at smaller geographic levels.

Continuous Measurement Alternative

Depends on Federal Data Needs and Cost

Under the continuous measurement design, the Bureau would produce basic counts in the census year but would collect various characteristics data on a sample basis throughout the decade. This approach has both positive and negative implications. This approach trades off census sample data for small areas to produce more timely data over the decade for larger geographic areas over the decade. The frequency of the data would vary from 1 year for

states and large metropolitan areas to 5 years for smaller areas (below 50,000 population). Many users expressed reservations about the ability of this design to satisfy their needs for data tabulated at lower levels of geography such as census tracts, neighborhoods and small towns, cities, and counties. The Bureau continues to believe that continuous measurement has merit and is conducting further research and evaluation efforts in this area.

The interest in continuous measurement grows out of the desire to obtain more sociodemographic data in between decennial censuses for subnational areas.⁵ For example, legislation was passed in 1976 mandating a mid-decade census. The Congress hoped that the cost of conducting such a census would generally be offset by reductions in other statistical series. Because the Bureau could not identify substantial cost offsets, OMB did not request and the Congress did not provide funds to take a mid-decade census.

We believe, given the likely costs of expanding the collection of data between censuses, the only feasible offsets of sufficient magnitude are reductions in the cost of the decennial census. Cost efficiencies appear most probable for the 2000 census by using procedures to obtain greater public cooperation and to use sampling during the follow-up efforts. Moreover, the

⁵See Federal Data Collection: Measuring Race and Ethnicity is Complex and Controversial (GAO/T-GGD-93-21, Apr. 14, 1993) and Federal Formula Programs: Outdated Population Data Used to Allocate Most Funds (GAO/HRD-90-145, Sept. 27, 1990)

availability of continually updated address files and geographic data would enhance the accuracy and reduce the cost of intercensal data.

1994 BUDGET REQUEST MAY UNDERFUND SOME IMPORTANT ACTIVITIES

Based on our review of the Bureau's 1994 budget request, data processing requirements initiative, and discussions with Bureau officials, we are concerned that the fiscal year 1994 budget request has not allowed sufficient funds for some important research and testing activities. The adequacy of census planning in the next few years will have significant implications for the 2000 census and beyond, and the availability of sufficient funding is important for that planning. Prudent investments today can lead to savings tomorrow. Specifically, we question whether the Bureau's 1994 budget request contains sufficient funding for data capture research,⁶ improvements in the Bureau's address list and automated geographic system, and 1995 test preparations.

Data Processing Research and Testing May Be Underfunded

The Bureau has made several assumptions for 2000 census data processing: the primary method for collecting data will be

⁶Data capture involves the reading and interpretation of data from census questionnaires.

mailout/mailback with respondent-friendly rather than processing-friendly questionnaires; the 2000 census workload will be larger than it was in 1990; and the processing schedule will be the same or compressed. The Bureau also seeks to reduce the error level in processing. To satisfy these needs, the Bureau has established a goal of developing a processing system that uses a one-step image scanning device to replace the two-step process that has been used in the past several censuses. The system also incorporates optical character and mark recognition, whereas the existing system only recognizes marks. Because of the risks and uncertainties of developing such a system, the Bureau decided to develop the new system, while maintaining and upgrading its existing one.

The Bureau has prepared a requirements initiative for data capture equipment and engineering support for the year 2000 research and development program. The initiative calls for much of the work to be done through contractor support. The initiative identifies an implementation schedule for completing the tasks but recognizes the uncertainties of the funding. The Bureau requirements initiative identifies a shortfall of about \$1.5 million (of \$3.9 million needed).

Major census automation activities require careful planning, time for testing, and front-end investments. We are concerned that the scenario developing for the 2000 census is reminiscent of the

Bureau's automation initiatives planned for the 1990 census. In preparing for the 1990 census, the Bureau eliminated a possible data capture methodology early in its planning phase. We believe the Bureau's decision was influenced by its late start in detailed planning, reluctance to revise the questionnaire form, and a slow procurement process.⁷

In planning for the 2000 census, we thought the Bureau was on a better schedule, but we are now concerned that a lack of funding could eliminate another opportunity to thoroughly explore promising technology. In addition to the funding limitations, the requirements initiative has been delayed for about 5 months in part because of procurement process questions identified by the Commerce Inspector General and currently unresolved within the Department of Commerce. Procurement delays in acquiring minicomputers for the 1990 census led to a \$1.1 million payment to bid protestors and delayed software development and testing and address list development activities.⁸

⁷See Decennial Census: Status of Plans to Computerize Questionnaire Data (GAO/GGD-86-76BR, May 5, 1986)

⁸See Decennial Census--Minicomputer Procurement Delays and Bid Protests: Effects on the 1990 Census (GAO/GGD-88-70, June 16, 1988).

Geographic Support Activities May Be Underfunded

We are concerned that the 1994 budget request does not provide sufficient funds for geographic support activities that require long lead times. The budget does not provide for street canvassing to reconcile differences that will inevitably be identified in an imminent test comparing address lists of the Bureau and the Postal Service. Such a reconciliation is needed to determine the accuracy of Postal Service updates for the Bureau's address list. Moreover, the methodology to update the Bureau's automated geographic files is not known at this time. This methodology also may result in the need for additional funds.

Test Census Preparations May Be Underfunded

We question whether the fiscal year 1994 budget provides sufficiently for preparations necessary for the 1995 test census. Although plans are not complete, the Bureau now is considering four locations for its test, compared to two locations it assumed would be needed when it prepared the 1994 budget. Although this difference may not appreciably affect the resources needed for most planning activities, it could affect the resources needed for updating the geographic information and creating the address list for the four selected sites. These activities need to occur mostly in fiscal year 1994.

LITTLE TIME LEFT FOR FUNDAMENTAL REFORM TO SUCCEED

The Bureau's efforts to assess design alternatives have consumed valuable time and scarce resources. In the time remaining before the September 1993 deadline, the Bureau, the Department of Commerce, and OMB must quickly focus on those features viable for the 2000 census that offer genuine opportunities to improve the coverage accuracy of the census at a reasonable cost while meeting federal data needs. We also encourage the continued exploration of new ways to collect data between decennial censuses.

As our society has changed in fundamental ways, so must fundamental changes occur in the census. Such census breakthroughs can occur only if they are properly planned, tested, and implemented. Bureau, Commerce, and OMB officials collectively and cooperatively must assume the responsibility for leading this effort. They must clarify the necessity and purpose of fundamental change, establish the proper sense of urgency, develop plans for its implementation, and devote appropriate resources to its accomplishment.

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This concludes my prepared statement. My colleagues and I would be pleased to answer any questions.

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